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A History Of

# HOOOSIER BOYS FIRE COMPANY

and  
the

## AUBURN FIRE DEPARTMENT

1885-2010  
125 YEARS



Fire Chief  
Michael VanZile

BY JOHN MARTIN SMITH

DeKalb County Historian

\$9.95







A History Of  
**HOOOSIER BOYS  
FIRE COMPANY**  
and the **AUBURN FIRE DEPARTMENT**



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## CHAPTER ONE

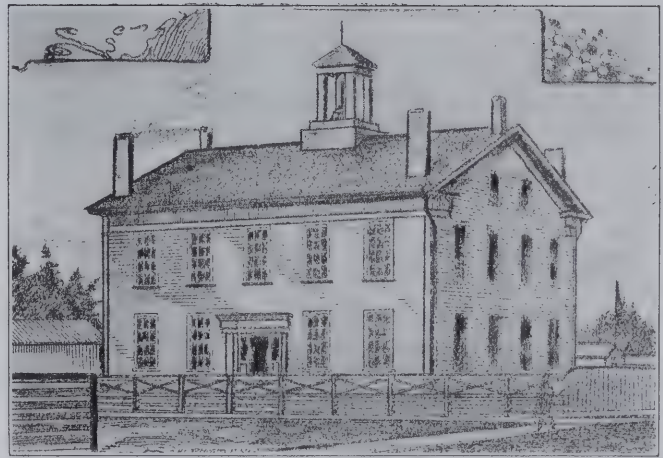
# Hoosier Boys Fire Company

Fire was absolutely necessary to our ancestors. Fire cooked their food and kept them warm in the winter.

Conversely, the fear of uncontrolled fire was pervasive. Most buildings were made of wood, had wood shingle roofs, and were heated by wood. Sparks from chimneys could easily ignite a roof fire.

While water was available from private or public wells, it was not available in quantity, nor under pressure. In the event a building caught on fire, the only way to fight the fire was by the proverbial "bucket brigade". Despite the efforts of neighbors, the effort was often futile, and a person's home or business was damaged or destroyed.

In 1875, the Auburn Academy was totally destroyed by fire. The Academy was a private school operated by Professor Hippensteel. Public education in that era ended at the eighth grade. Any parent desiring further education for their child enrolled the child in the Auburn Academy and paid tuition to Professor Hippensteel. The Academy was a handsome, two story building, located on the block surrounded by South Jackson, West Twelfth, South Van Buren, and West Thirteenth Streets on a tract reserved in the original



*The Auburn Academy, which was located at the present site of the Eckhart Public Library.*

plat of Auburn for "school purposes". (The present location of the Eckhart Public Library). The Auburn Academy building burned on October 16, 1875. The Waterloo Press reported:

### Fire at Auburn

*At about ten o'clock on Saturday night late, a fire entirely consumed the wooden high school building at Auburn. Citizens of the town seem generally to believe that it was the work of incendiaries, but what purpose they could have had in view is not clear. The building was old, being, after the Newville*



[Academy] building, the first school house of any pretensions erected in the county. The value of it, therefore, could not have been large, but it is unfortunate just at this time, when the schools for the year have just fairly opened. The building contained considerable valuable furniture, most of which was destroyed or badly damaged in its hasty removal. The total loss may be fairly estimated at \$10,000.00 upon which there was insurance in the amount of \$3,500.00.

A new brick school house was built on the same site. It too burned on December 2, 1880. The Waterloo Press reported:

### School House Burned



The Auburn Academy fire which occurred October 16, 1875.

Tuesday evening the new brick school house at Auburn was totally destroyed by fire. The walls were standing on Wednesday morning, but in such a damaged condition as to be valueless for rebuilding purposes. The fire caught from the pipes of the furnace with which the building was heated. At six o'clock the fire broke out of the south side of the building, and, as the town has no fire apparatus worth mentioning, it was beyond control of the helpless citizens in a few moments. The loss, including furniture and fixtures, cannot be less than \$16,000, on which, we understand there was insurance to the amount of \$7,000 in the Watertown Insurance Company, of New York. In addition to this loss, the Principal of the School lost a valuable library, and most of the books, etc., belonging to the pupils were destroyed.

The building was erected about five years ago, the town selling its bonds to pay for it. Most, if not all, of these bonds are yet unpaid. The loss is one of the most serious that could befall a town, especially at

the time when the schools are in session. We presume some arrangement will be made for temporary quarters for the schools until a new building can be provided.

State of the art firefighting equipment available in 1885 was a steam driven pumper. The pumper was called a "Fire Engine" because it was literally a steam engine on wheels, which powered a water pump, which was coupled to a hose that would suck water out of a cistern and then direct it under pressure to a hose that was used to spray water onto a fire.

It was with this background, that on July 6, 1885, the town of Auburn entered into a lease-purchase agreement with the Ahrens Manufacturing Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, for a "one fourth size tubular boiler Ahrens Steam Fire Engine, Number 416". The specifications are elaborate:

- furnished with one air pump
- safety valves
- two nickel plated steam gauges
- one nickel plated water pressure gauge
- one glass water gauge, four gauge cocks
- one surface blow cock and attachments for their hose
- one signal whistle
- one variable exhaust nozzle and steam jet
- one large copper air chamber, with ornament
- twenty feet of rubber suction hose attached to pump and carried on brackets around the engine ready for immediate service
- copper suction strainer
- a full set of discharge pipes and nozzles of various sizes
- foot brake on rear of coal bunker

The specifications also included: all the tools, wrenches, etc. to work the engine successfully, oil cans, fire shovels and poker, also box for tools, also five hundred feet 1 ½ inch (inside measure) rubber hose of the very best quality warranted to stand a pressure of 400 lbs. to the square inch with patented screw couplings attached.

It was also necessary to have a two wheeled balanced hand hose cart... "well and substantially built of the best quality XXX charcoal iron, furnished with patent wooden wheels 64 inches in diameter, hose cart worked by right and left



cranks, with arch and bell, drag rope, torches and pick axe."

There was also a Hook and Ladder Wagon, which carried the hooks and ladders to the fire site.

The Town was obligated to pay four hundred dollars each six months but could purchase the equipment at anytime for \$3750, less what had been paid in lease payments plus interest at six percent.



*Members of the Hoosier Boys Fire Company proudly display the 1885 Ahrens Steam Fire Engine, Number 416 and "two wheeled balanced hose cart".*

The Waterloo Press reported on July 9, 1885:

*The fire engine arrived last week and a company has been organized with Capt. Silver as foreman, and the company have exercised the machine several times already with satisfactory results, throwing water entirely over the school building last Monday eve. The manufacturer of the engine is still here to acquaint the engineer with all its varied complications, and when all parties are satisfied the purchase will be completed, the cost at the factory being \$3,725.*

Most houses had cisterns, which caught rain water from roof eaves. The rain water was "soft water" used for laundry and bathing. Most cisterns were made of stone or brick and frequently held 300-500 gallons of water. The "Fire Engine" would pump water out of a cistern to fight a fire. Firemen were limited by the proximity of a cistern to a fire site and the length of hose available.

Gradually, the town established "fire cisterns" at strategic locations, which permitted the accumulation of spring and ground water.

There were thirty fire cisterns constructed in Auburn which were kept full by springs or street drainage. The cisterns were 16 feet in diameter and 8 feet deep. Some were lined with brick and others were lined with white cypress wood.

At the sound of the fire bell the team was hitched to the steam fire engine. A small fire was kept going constantly in the engine which was fed and stoked while the engine was on its way to the fire. By the time it arrived, steam was up to sufficient pressure to pump water from the nearest cistern onto the fire.

Alarm boxes were installed in 1890, and water hydrants were first used in 1898.

Until the new City Hall was built, the Fire Department was located in the former Town Hall. The move to the new City Hall was made on January 8, 1914.

On September 2, 1914, a chemical tank was installed on the hose wagon and on September 15, 1915, all members were instructed as to its operation.

The black horses which drew the Steam Fire Engine to the fire were well trained for their duties. The horses were kept in a stable in City Hall. Harnesses were suspended from the ceiling so the horses could be led under them and quickly hitched. The driver operated a footbell. As long as the driver maintained the rhythmical ringing of the bell, the horses would be at full



*Hook and ladder wagon with Auburn Town Hall in the background. The fire bell in the steeple was purchased in 1888. It was later moved to the Bell Tower in the present City Hall and later to Auburn Fire Station One.*



## AUBURN CITY HALL

The Auburn City Hall was built in 1913 during the administration of Mayor Hugh Culbertson at the northeast corner of South Cedar and East Ninth Street. It is a handsome building with a bell tower that was used to summon firefighters. The contractor was Harry H. Ackemere of Auburn. The building housed city offices and the Auburn Fire Department. When built, the fire department used horses to draw a steam powered fire engine. The building contained stables and a hay loft. A small fire was kept burning in the steam fire engine. As the horses pulled the unit to a fire, the fire under the steam boiler was stoked up to build up steam. The unit was used to pump water from cisterns strategically located around the city.

The City Hall has been modernized several times. The last extensive modification occurred in 1999, after Fire Station #1 was built under the administration of Mayor Norman Rohm.

gallop. When the rhythm of the bell slowed, the horses slowed and were stopped with the reins. Horses were exercised at noon every Saturday. They started at the fire barn on Ninth Street then to Main Street, to North Street, and then to Jackson Street. Finally, they ran back to the fire barn at full gallop! That same tradition continues today, but with no horses; every Saturday the fire apparatus that had not been driven that week, is taken out and driven to make sure it is functioning properly.



*Hoosier Boys with hose cart. (Note hats).*

The acquisition of equipment led to the formation of the Hoosier Boys Fire Company on November 7, 1885, with Edward Long, Chief; Frank A. Benedict, Assistant Chief; Frank E. Rose, Secretary; and Hugh R. Culbertson, Treasurer. The Company was a private association and was not a part of Auburn Town Government.

Officers were elected annually and consisted of:

- Chief
- Assistant Chief
- Foreman – Engine
- Foreman – Hose Cart
- Foreman – Hook and Ladder Wagon
- Secretary

Election of officers were usually contested with two to five nominees for each office. Sometimes there were as many as five ballots before one person received a majority.

Members of the Hoosier Boys Fire Company were elected by the Membership. Proposed names were submitted at one meeting and voted on at the following meeting. The Company was usually limited to twelve members.

The Company met monthly. Members were fined ten cents for unexcused absences such as "sickness" or "out of town".

Members who missed more than four meetings were "asked to resign," were "expelled," or received an "Honorable Discharge". Several were named "Honorary Members" after years of service.

While the large brass bell's loud ring announced that there was a fire somewhere in town, how was it known that it should be rung? Where was the fire?

In 1890 the Hoosier Boys proposed that there be an electrical alarm system with the Hoosier Boys then to supply the wire and bells and the Town Board to purchase and erect the poles. The system was installed at a cost of \$182.40, most of which was raised by subscriptions. It was functional in 1891.

Later, the Home Telephone Company provided free telephones to each Hoosier Boy Fire Company Member.



When the Auburn water supply system was initiated, the first fire hydrant was used on December 6, 1898 at a house fire located on 4th street.

Copious Minutes were kept by the Secretary. The Hoosier Boys Fire Company Minute Book has been culled for interesting and representative entries:

#### **NOVEMBER 7, 1885 MINUTES**

*Edward Long, Hugh Culbertson, Frank Birst, Frank Benedict, George Lanning, Eli J. Border and Frank Rose being the seven persons selected by the Town Board of the incorporated Town of Auburn, DeKalb County, State of Indiana, to constitute Charter Members of a Fire Department to be organized by them met on the day above set forth and Mr. Frank A. Birst was made temporary Chairman, Frank E. Rose temporary Secretary and the members then proceeded to elect a Chief, Asst. Chief, Secretary and Treasurer to be confirmed Monday evening, November 9, 1885, that being the regular night of meetings.*

*The electing of Chief being first in order .*

*Mr. Hugh Culbertson and Edward Long were announced as candidates for the office ballot was had and Long receiving the majority of votes cast was declared elected. Speech by Long was called for to which he responded in elegant language and flowing sentences with great and good effect.*

*Brothers Benedict and Culbertson were the only names announced for Assistant Chief, which ballot resulted in election of F.A. Benedict as Asst. Chief, Mr. Benedict being old and infirmed he could not be induced to speak.*



*Hoosier Boys pose with horses and wagon with Auburn Town Hall in the background.*

### **"... NO ONE KNEW WHERE THE HORSES WERE ..."**

August 14, 1893 – Monday, alarm turned in from south end box about 2:30 p.m. caused by a fire in Wm. Armstrong's barn. Engine was very slow in arriving as no one knew where the horses were. Fire caused from a child playing with matches. Loss about \$50.00.

(From Auburn Fire Department Log Book)

*Name of Frank E. Rose being the only one announced for Secretary, he was declared unanimously elected.*

*Hugh R. Culbertson was shown similar respect and not voted for but declared elected.*

*There being no further candidate in the field for Treasurer. This office represents the financial part of the Company.*

*Mr. Culbertson was called on for a speech to which he replied with thirsty eyes and trembling hands.*

*Names of persons were now suggested to be made members of the Company and by motion Long, Benedict and Culbertson were appointed to select five men out of those selected suggesting to meet with us on next Monday evening November 9, 1885. Persons selected by the Committee were Howard McCurd, Chas Schaab, Chas Jackson, J.A. McIntyre and W.P. Harter.*

When the first motorized fire truck was put into service in 1919, the fire horses were "put out to pasture" at the farm on East Seventh Street, near the present day DeKalb Memorial Hospital. One of the horses died within a week. The driver, Mr. Cogswell, and Dr. Fitch, a veterinarian, went out to investigate but could not determine a cause of death other than "broken heart" at being retired after all the years of faithful service. Several weeks later a west wind carried the sounds of the fire bell to the pastures. The remaining old horse jumped the fence at a full gallop, ran to the fire barn, and was found waiting for his harness to



be put on when the firefighters returned to the station. Today when a firefighter retires, they are called "an old fire horse", because they sometime still show up at fires.



*Fire cistern located on Douglas Street, North or Michigan Street. There was a cast iron rim around the tap, the sides are cedar, and bricks surround the opening.*

In 1892 the Company paid for Members to attend "fire tournament" in Elkhart. A rig was hired to take the Hoosier Boys to the Depot in Waterloo, from where they took the train to Elkhart. Each member was to wear his uniform.

The minutes dated June 20, 1893, approved the Company have an "Exhibition Fire Drill" on July 4, 1893.

In 1894 the Company requested that the Auburn Town Board purchase rubber coats for its Members.

On June 11, 1894, the Company voted to send Mrs. S.C. Swineford a bill for \$10 for two days use of the fire engine. Mrs. Swineford owned the Swineford House Hotel. It was not indicated how she used the fire engine.

In 1894, an "Oyster Supper" was held the night of the election of officers. The winning candidates were to "set up" the supper. On November 26, 1894, a bill for oysters in the amount of \$3.25 was approved.

On July 12, 1897, the Company requested the Town Board for three good lanterns for engines (such as Eclipse) and four lanterns for the ladder wagon (cheaper).

The Hoosier Boys sometimes received gifts in appreciation for their services. The minutes of January 14, 1901, reported that "Will Spangler presented the box of cigars on account of fire at his property at South End."

## "... SOME TIME WAS LOST IN GETTING UP STEAM ..."

February 5, 1885 - Alarm was sent in from Engine House on account of a fire in A.E. Benedict repair shop. The company was out in good shape, but on account of the very cold weather, some time was lost in getting up steam also on account of slush and ice forming in the hose and choking at the nozzle, but the boys did good work. Damage to E.A. Benedict was almost a total loss. Some of the tools were taken out but were damaged. E.A. Benedict lost building and tools, \$1,800.00, S. Hollester building \$800.00, Hunt, Roster and Baker \$3,000.00.

(From Auburn Fire Department Log Book)

In minutes dated December 31, 1901, the "Company restricts the driver that no person outside the Company or Superintendent of Water Works ride on the seat of the Hose Wagon - also to drive with a tight line."

The Hoosier Boys held fundraising events. In 1903 they netted \$108.90 by sponsoring a "Colonial Moving Picture Show."



## CHAPTER TWO

# Organization And Personnel

Having had "town" status since 1849, Auburn became a city in 1900. Gradually, more functions became a part of city government.



*Seal of the City of Auburn*

The private "Hoosier Boys Fire Company" was disbanded and the Fire Department was reorganized on December 6, 1911, and named "Auburn's Volunteer Fire Company" with Ora Brandon, Chief, and George Weaver, Assistant Chief.

The Fire Department was manned by Volunteers for many years.

When the Department was all volunteer, a few firefighters trained to drive the trucks would go to the fire station and respond the needed equipment to the scene. The other firefighters, with blue lights activated, drove their personal cars and went directly to the scene.

The Auburn's Fire Department gradually became staffed with full-time (career) firefighters. In the 1920's Frank Beard was hired by the city to



*Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1938: John Schlink, Walter Moffet, Harry Williamson, Guy Clement, Earl Huffman, Ted Walters, A.L. Cogswell – Fire Chief, Jim Steffen, Jay Loutzenhiser, Perry Long, Bruce Shanton, Frank Dragoo, Frank Baber, Melvin Brando.*



*Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1942: Schlink, Baber, Quaintance, Williamson, Scott, Kalb, Walters – Chief, Grogg, Herboshimer, Sommers, Quinn, Potter, Brandon.*



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become Auburn's first paid firefighter. Firefighter Beard lived in an apartment on the second floor of the fire station. Around 1950 Robert Stackhouse and Dennis Lung were hired as career firefighters. Also in the 1950's the department's name changed to become the "Auburn Fire Department". Along with the Volunteer and Career Firefighters, Auburn's fire department became what is known as a "Combination Fire Department".

Three shifts (A, B, and C) are staggered so that there are firefighters on duty at all times. They get out the required vehicle and head for the fire. The volunteers use their personal cars to drive to the Station or directly to the fire.

In recent years, the Fire Department has been staffed with 19 full-time career firefighters. All three shifts are served with 24 hours on duty and



Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1959: Seated: Gene Stebing, Dale "Sam" Grogg, Howard Dilley, John Finley, Gilbert Potter - Chief, Dale Heitz. Standing: Harry McClellan, Robert Stackhouse, Alpheus McClellan, Denis Lung, Robert Bard, Harold Walters, John McComas.



48 hours off duty. Currently 25 Volunteer Firefighters serve the fire department.

The Auburn Fire Department is under the jurisdiction of the Auburn Board of Works and Safety.

The organizational chain of command is:

### Staff Officers

Working a 40 hour work week, these four officers are responsible for the day to day operations of the fire department. These officers are also responsible for Command at emergency scenes, all of the training, investigations and inspections, along with many other duties.

Fire Chief Michael VanZile  
Deputy Chief Mike Good  
Division Chief Doug Cox  
Fire Marshal David Bunn  
Administrative Assistant Shawn Rayle

### Career Personnel

These individuals work a 24 on/48 off schedule. Their primary duties include: Emergency incident response, station and apparatus maintenance, conduct and perform training, fire station housekeeping duties, fire hydrant maintenance, and various other functions. Each shift and station has one officer on duty who will maintain control on the scene until a staff officer arrives.

Captain Tony Griffin  
Captain Ken Knox  
Captain Chip LaRowe  
Lieutenant Kim Boger  
Lieutenant Troy Jester  
Lieutenant Joe Molargik  
Firefighter Scott Russell  
Firefighter Dan Braun  
Firefighter Gabe Creech  
Firefighter James Hile  
Firefighter Travis Hill  
Firefighter Shane Jacobs  
Firefighter Rob Koher  
Firefighter Jason Kreisler  
Firefighter Andy Maloney

The majority of the Career Firefighters are members of the Auburn Professional Firefighters Local 2454 of the International Association of Firefighters.



Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1971: Seated: V. Stebing, H. Dilley, G. Potter, J. McComas, D. Heitz, B. Smith. Standing: J. Greenfield, J. Hess, G. Morton, A. McClellan, D. Lung, B. Walters, C. Boger, R. Morton, R. Bard.



Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1985 Commemorating the Centennial of the Hoosier Boys Fire Company/Auburn Fire Department: Front Row Left to Right: Betty Carbaugh - Commissioner, Kim Boger, Mike Steury, Curt Howard, Eric Hodge - Lieutenant, Gary McPheeters, Ron Scheurich, Jack Baysinger, Not present - Earl Healy. Back Row Left to Right: Dick Stahly - Assistant Chief, Jeff Stemen, Bill Walters - Chief, Dave Johnson, Bruce Zieger - Captain, William "Doc" Hathaway, Clarence Boger, Dave Bunn - Fire Marshal



Firemen playing pool in a back room of the Auburn City Hall. While dedicated to hard work and service, the paid and volunteer firemen enjoyed social camaraderie!





Members of Auburn Fire Department in 1994. Front row, from left: Troy Stahly, Kim Boger, Aaron Krontz, Brad Pepple, Todd Bonecutter, Julie Dendinger, Mike Miller, Gary McPheeters, Chip LaRowe, Dave Johnson, Tim Berger, James Stephens, Mayor Norm Rohm. Back row, from left: Tim Howard, Ken Knox, Darren Dickerhoof, Mark Bryant, Aaron Ginder, Mike Good, Chief Jerry Bauermeister, Peter Hathaway, Tony Griffin, Kerry Ginder, Dave Bunn, Jeff Stemen, Mike Van Zile.

### Volunteer Personnel

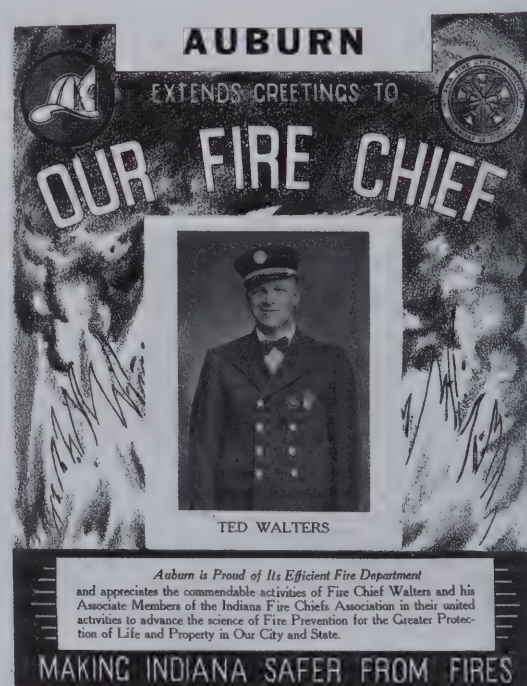
These individuals work on an on call basis. All of them have full time jobs outside of the fire department and respond to emergencies whenever alarms come in. They are the ones counted on to complete the staffing needed at the scene of an emergency. They, along with the Career Personnel, are the firefighters mostly responsible for containing and extinguishing the fire.

Support Firefighter Bob Allmandinger  
 Firefighter Jeff Antrup  
 Firefighter Scott Badger  
 Support Firefighter Todd Bonecutter  
 Firefighter Mark Bryant  
 Firefighter David Clark  
 Firefighter Jamie Collins  
 Firefighter Peter Hathaway  
 Firefighter Bruce Hunter  
 Firefighter Nick Johnson  
 Firefighter Steve Jones  
 Support Firefighter Cindy Kimmel  
 Firefighter Josh LaRowe  
 Firefighter Dave Marlowe  
 Support Firefighter Lara Myers  
 Firefighter Jason Penland  
 Firefighter Mark Powell  
 Support Firefighter Byron Schutt  
 Firefighter Bren Skeens  
 Firefighter Heather Sloan  
 Support Firefighter Bill Walters  
 Firefighter Paul White, Jr.  
 Photographer Stefanie Myers  
 Chaplin Steve Kummernuss

All of the Volunteer Firefighters are members of the Indiana Volunteer Fireman's Association.

While the records are not complete, the persons believed to have served as Fire Chief of the City of Auburn are:

1885-1890	Edward Long
1890-1891	R.S. McClellan
1891-1903	John F. Ober
1903-1911	Harry Richmond
1911-1914	Ora Brandon
1914-1915	Willis Baughman
1915-1919	Frank E. Dragoo
1919-1922	J. Perry Long
1922-1923	Crist Fell
1923-1925	L.E. Harding
1925-1926	G. Allen Lawrence
1926-1936	F.G Dragoo
1936-1938	A. Lester Cogswell
1938-1943	Ted Walters
1943-1972	Gilbert Potter
1972-1975	Bill Walters
1975-1976	Dale Heitz
1975-1991	Bill Walters
1991-1992	Jeff Stemen
1992-1992	Clarence Boger
1992-2005	Jerry Bauermeister
2005-	Michael VanZile



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INDIANA FIRE CHIEFS 1941 MAGAZINE

The Auburn Fire Department sponsored a full page tribute to their chief, Ted Walters, in the 1941 Indiana Fire Chiefs Magazine.



## CHAPTER THREE

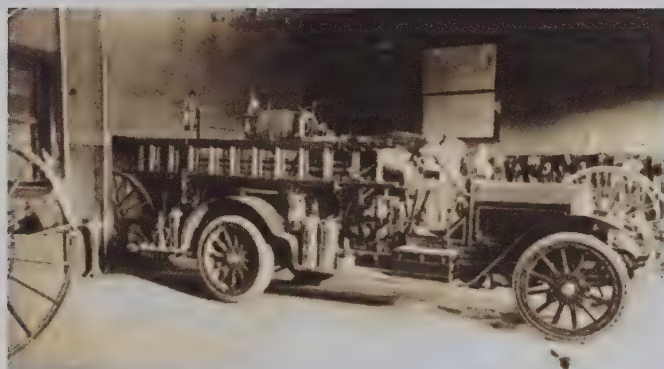
# Motorized Fire Apparatus

The Auburn Fire Department's Motorized Apparatus has been upgraded from time to time.

### Former Fire Apparatus

Known Fire Apparatus Formerly Used by the Auburn Fire Department:

Date Acq.	Make & Type
1919	1917 American LaFrance Pumper 1930 American LaFrance Type 91 Pumper (This truck has been restored by Auburn Fire Fighters.)
1946	1936 Ford Rural Fire Truck (made from a wrecked Panel Truck)
06/17/1947	1947 American LaFrance 1000 GPM Pumper (This truck is now owned by American Legion Post in Auburn.)
9/4/1953	1953 American LaFrance 1000 GPM Pumper
Early 1971	1971 Dodge 4-Wheel Drive 200 GPM Darley Pump



1917 American LaFrance Fire Truck purchased in 1919. This was the Fire Department's first motorized unit.



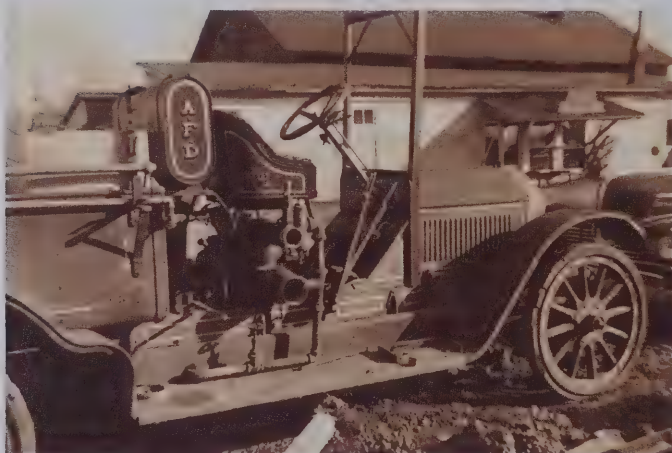
1917 American LaFrance Fire Truck decorated for Fire Prevention Week in 1925. (Note the second story windows with curtains. This area was living quarter for firemen.)



- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Early 1973 | 1961 Ford Van Auburn's First Rescue Unit (This truck was built from a Holsum Bakery Truck) |
| 7/29/1965  | 1967 Ford LaFrance Quint - 75' Aerial Ladder with a 1000 GPM Pump                          |
| 2/7/1974   | 1962 2 1/2 Ton Army Truck converted to Auburn's First 1800 Gal Tanker                      |
| 5/6/1976   | 1976 Mack 1000 GPM Pumper  |
| 4/7/1977   | 1977 Dodge Van Emergency-Rescue Unit   |
| 4/4/1981   | 1972 Mack 1800 Gal Tanker  |
| 2/26/1980  | 1980 Mack 1000 GPM Pumper  |



The 1917 American LaFrance Fire Truck met a disgraceful end at the Ochstein Junkyard at Auburn Junction. (Note that the brass lights had been removed.) The gold leaf lettering read "Auburn F.D. No. 1." The former Sour Kraut Factory is in the background.



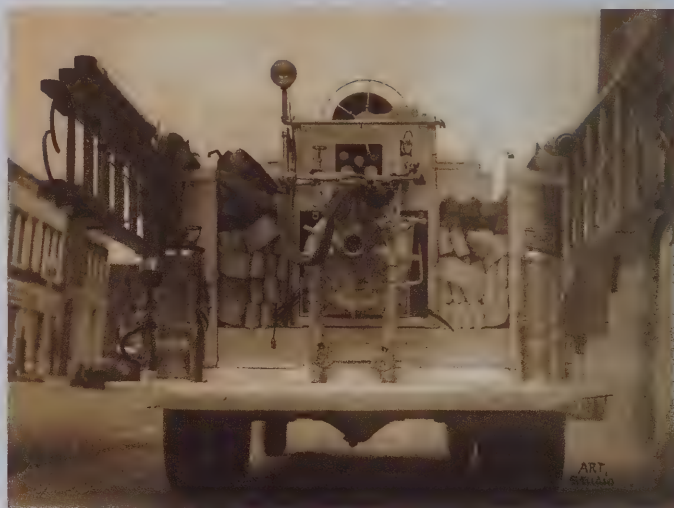
The 1917 Auburn American LaFrance Fire Truck reposes nose to nose to a car waiting to be scrapped. This was likely during WWII when all available scrap materials were melted down to recycle into war material.



1930 American LaFrance Fire Truck, which was "state of the art" at the time. Fire Chief, Ted Walter, is standing in the foreground with other firemen in the background. This truck is designated Number 2. It has been restored by the Auburn Fire Department.



1936 Ford Ladder/Pumper Truck designated Number 3.



This rear view of the 1936 Ford Truck shows the pump and hose. This would have given the Department the ability to pump water out of cisterns or other sources of water.





1947 American LaFrance Fire Truck. This truck had a V12 Lycoming Engine, which was also used in 1931 - 1934 Auburn Automobile. The Lycoming Engine Company was owned by the Auburn Automobile Company.



1967 American LaFrance Quint 75' Aerial.



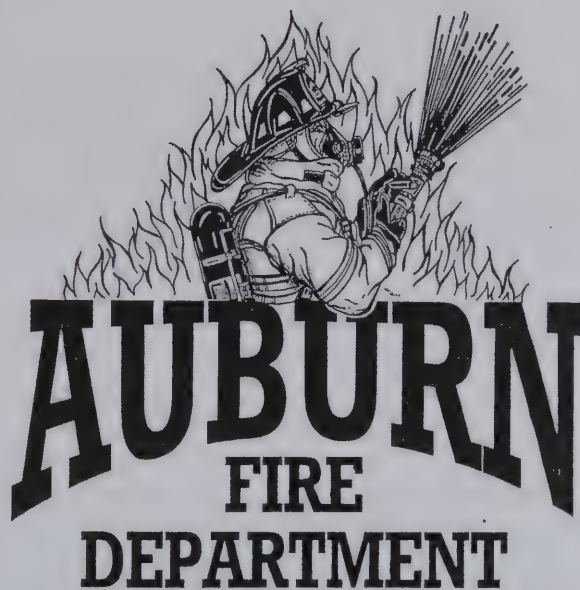
1976 Mack 1000 gpm Pumper. In service from 1976 - 2009.



1977 Dodge Rescue Unit



1972 Mack 2000 Gallon Tanker





## FIRE DESTROYS AUBURN BLOCK

### Blaze Discovered at 7:30 in McBride Store Swept Through Two Buildings

Fire swept the Main Street room of the W. C. McBride Company department store on February 9, 1931, spread to the Atlantic & Pacific Grocery Store adjoining and for a time threatened the entire block of buildings bounded by Main and Seventh Streets.

The fire was the worst in the business section of Auburn since the destruction of the McIntyre Factory on February 8, 1913, and the most spectacular since the Masonic Temple fire December 23, 1923, causing a loss of \$45,000.

The loss was estimated at \$85,000 from fire, smoke and water. The entire stock of ladies ready-to-wear of the McBride Company, much of the stock of dry goods of the company in the Seventh Street store, and the grocery stock of the A & P were a loss.

Besides these stocks considerable damage resulted from smoke to the merchandize of the Ashley Hat Shop, M. Mabel & Co., grocers, E.O. Little, jeweler and the Culbertson Hardware Store, all in the same block of buildings.

A singular circumstance in connection with the fire was that the old frame building adjoining the McBride Company store on the north and owned by Miss Jessie Prickett Milner, escaped the flames. The building, two stories in height and one of the oldest in town was not even scorched. It was the only building in the vicinity through which the dense smoke did not penetrate.

The fire was discovered about 7:30 by Lewis Prouty, acting Assistant Manager of the J.C. Penney Company across Main Street, while locking up the store, attracted by what he thought were some new window lighting effects. He said the front of the building was unusually brilliant and that the window trimmings appeared to be moving as if by artificial breeze. Then he saw flames leap up in the front of the store. The origin of the blaze still remained a mystery Tuesday. Mr. McBride left the store about 5:45 and his son, Ralph, had looked after the furnace and locked the store for the night. It is probable that the fire started from the furnace in some manner.

Record - Herald February 12, 1931



## CHAPTER FOUR

# "Fire, Fire, Fire!" Reporting a Fire and Summoning Firefighters

Fires have been reported in various ways. Obviously, the first method was by voice – shouting FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!

A fire bell was purchased from Vanduzen and Taft in 1888 for \$375.00. The bell was rung to alert Hoosier Boy Fire Company members to a fire. The bell was also rung 30 minutes prior to Company meetings.

When the Auburn City Hall was built in 1914, the bell was moved to its bell tower.

The bell was rung by a rope extending from the tower to ground level. It was later "motorized".

The Hoosier Boys Fire Company Meeting Minutes of May 10, 1891, record discussion as to installing fire alarm boxes. On August 24, 1890, a bid for 75 poles was approved for the installation of fire alarm boxes. In June, 1892, an invoice from Eagle Iron Works for alarm box castings was approved. It is unknown where the alarm boxes were located or how they operated.

Later a "fire whistle" replaced the bell. It was located in the City Utility Building on Wayne Street. It could be heard throughout the City.

In 1999, the fire bell was removed from the Bell Tower and is now hanging at Fire Station One at State Road 8 and County Road 35.

In 1925 Fire Chief L.E. Harding announced fire districts, each of which had a unique signal of short and long blasts from the fire whistle. There were 45 districts, with the major factories each comprising a separate district. For example:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| District No. 1:  | Business Section<br>– one long blast.  |
| District No. 22: | West of Indiana Avenue,<br>Fifteenth and Twentieth Streets<br>– two long and two short.  |
| District No. 41: | Auburn Auto Co.<br>– Four long and one short.  |
| District No. 42: | Auburn Foundry and<br>Auburn Rubber Co.<br>– Four long and two short.                    |
| District No. 45: | Auburn Postcard Manufacturing<br>Co., East Seventh Street<br>– Four long and five short. |

There is no report as to how well this system worked, but it seems that firefighters would have



had to carry the chart of "longs and shorts" with them and to listen closely in order to ascertain the location of the fire!

In addition to being sounded for fires, the fire whistle was sounded each Wednesday and Saturday at noon.

When the telephone came into common use, firefighters were called by the operator and told where the fire was located. The home or business telephone of volunteers was rung continuously until it was answered. The fire whistle summoned firefighters who were not near a telephone, although as soon as they could locate a telephone, they could call the operator to get the location. Likewise, curious citizens could call the operator to ask "Where's the fire?"

In more recent years automated telephone messages were used.

In the 1970's, the phone system currently in use was replaced by a radio paging system. The VHF system (which is currently in use) allows firefighters to be notified of an incident in a more timely manner and with greater range. Firefighters carry a small pager which is activated by the city's dispatch center, notifying firefighters by radio voice communications as to the nature and location of a fire call.

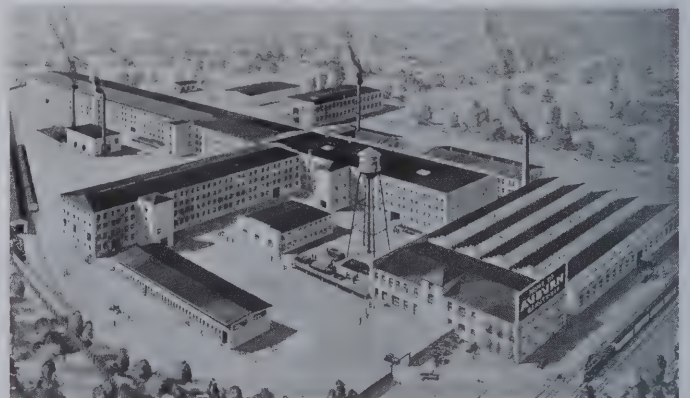
Fires are reported to the Auburn Police Department Dispatcher, who then activates the alarm. This system is still used for "land lines" but cellular telephone calls go to the DeKalb County 911 Call Dispatcher, who forwards the call to the Auburn Police Department.

## IRON LUNG

On July 6, 1946, the Fire Department received an Iron Lung, which was donated by the Moose Lodge. Iron Lungs provided life support for polio victims. The polio epidemic was pervasive from about 1940 until 1957, when the Salk Polio Vaccine became available.



*The present location of the Vanduzen and Taft Bell purchased in 1888 for \$375.00. It was installed in the Auburn Town Hall Steeple, later moved to the present Auburn City Hall Bell Tower, and now reposes in front of Station One at the Southeast corner of State Road 8 and County Road 35.*



*The Auburn Automobile Company was located in "District No. 41." A fire there was identified by four long and one short blasts of the fire whistle. Volunteer Firemen could go directly to the fire.*



## CHAPTER FIVE

# Location, Location, Location

It is important that Fire Stations be located so that they have optimal access to the entire areas in the city which they serve.

The original location of the Hoosier Boys Fire Company was the Auburn Town Hall, which was a frame building at the present location of the current Auburn City Hall. This building was built in 1851-1852 as the DeKalb County Jail.

When the present City Hall building was erected in 1914, it accommodated the fire department with stalls for the horses, space for the Ahrens Steam Fire Engine and other equipment. This location was known as Station #1 until 1998.

### Present Fire Stations

The Auburn Fire Department currently operates out of two manned fire stations. Both stations have a minimum of two personnel on duty 24 hours every day. Station #2 is home to the Fire Chief, the Deputy Chief and the Division Chief as well as an Administrative Assistant. Station #1 contains the office of the Fire Marshal.

### Station #1

Station #1 is located at the intersection of County Road 35 and State Road 8. It opened in



*Artist's conception of the present Auburn City Hall built in 1914. At that time the 1885 Ahrens Steam Fire Engine and other horse drawn equipment was still being used, so the building was designed to accommodate the equipment and horses.*



*The Hook and Ladder Wagon and a team of horses is posed on Ninth Street with the new Auburn City Hall in the background.*

1998 and was built to replace the original Station #1. Two firefighters staff this station 24 hours per day. The station also houses Engine 24, Engine 23, Tender 25, Squad 26, Truck 29, and Rehab 20.

Station #1 has full living quarters for the staff located there as well as room for additional firefighters. Volunteer firefighters sometimes work shifts along with the Career Firefighters.

The bell that hangs outside Station #1 was removed from the bell tower that still stands above the City of Auburn City Hall. When the present Station #1 was built, this bell was dedicated to all those who have ever served the citizens of Auburn as members of the Auburn Fire Department.

### Station #2

Station #2 is located at 902 S. Grandstaff Drive, at the southeast corner of Grandstaff Drive and 15th Street. Engine 22, Truck 27 and Brush 28 are housed at this location. In addition to full living quarters for the three firefighters that normally staff this station, Station #2 also serves as the primary training facility. The Training Facility is located on the east side of the station. Station #2 houses a well stocked library and classroom, which enables firefighters to keep abreast of the latest techniques available to help those served, and to keep firefighters safe when responding to emergencies.

This facility was originally built as the Allison Auto Parts Store. It was purchased by the City of Auburn and converted to a fire station in 1991.

At the front entrance a display case contains various fire related items collected throughout years of service to the Auburn Community.



*A Fireman shows off the team of black horses at the Auburn City Hall. There was a hay mow to hold feed for the horses. Harness was suspended from the ceiling so it could be quickly dropped into the horses in the event of a fire.*



*Station One, located at the Southeast corner of State Road 8 and County Road 35, was opened in 1998, replacing the facilities located in the Auburn City Hall.*



*Station Two, located at 902 South Grandstaff Drive, was originally the Allison Auto Parts Store. It was purchased by the City of Auburn and converted to the Fire Station in 1991.*



## CHAPTER SIX

# Conflagrations

Auburn has had several major fires with lasting consequences. Three major fires occurred in 1912 and 1913.

### January 16, 1912. Eckhart Carriage Company.

The Auburn Evening Star reported:

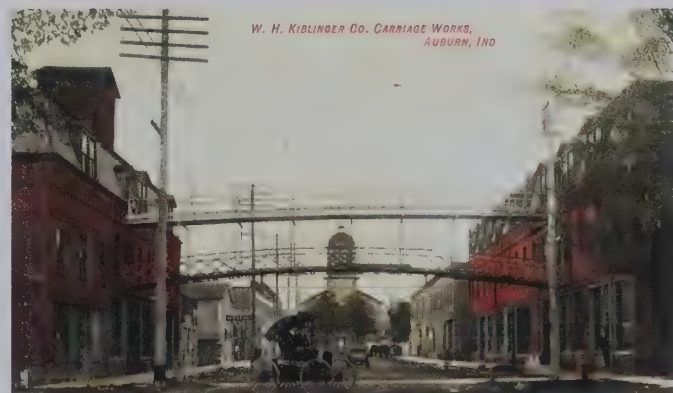
*The body filling rooms, or in other words, the birth-place of the Auburn Automobile, was totally destroyed by fire Tuesday morning, and in spite of the heroic efforts of the city fire department, which arrived upon the scene within a very few minutes after the alarm was sounded, the maddening flames did not cease their work of destruction until the entire building was leveled to the ground and a \$25,000 loss had been sustained.*

### The First Alarm

*The first signs of fire were discovered by Alman Burns, who, hastening across the street, sent in the alarm, which preceded the approach of the department by a very few moments. By this time the fire had practically gained possession of its prey and in view of the fact that the building was covered with sheet iron and that the roof was also of iron construction, the department could do nothing.*



The Eckhart Carriage Company was located on East 7th Street. A major fire destroyed much of the facility on January 16, 1912.



The McIntyre Automobile Company Factory Buildings One and Two were located on the East side of Jackson Street, between Seventh and Ninth Streets. The bridge over Eighth Street connected the second and third stories. The South building was used as a temporary Courthouse while the present Courthouse was being built. This building burned in February 8, 1913, destroying many county records.

While the water pressure was normal and a stream was directed into the midst of the burning mass, the fury of the flames was practically unabated and within a very few hours after the first signs of the fire had been discovered, the two-story building in which the Eckhart Carriage Company had been destroyed.

### **Night Watch Discover Fire**

The night watch, Mr. Born, discovered the fire at practically the same time as Mr. Burns, for, as he approached the building upon the mission of his 3 'clock rounds, he learned that the interior of the building was a mass of rolling flames.

### **Contained Carriage Bodies**

The body filling rooms, or what are commonly known as the Eckhart Warehouse, contained only carriage bodies, which were undergoing the finishing process. According to excellent authority obtained this morning, all finished bodies, which were in readiness for early shipments were and are still safe in the main factory and only those which were undergoing the finishing and painting process were destroyed with the building Tuesday morning.

Coming as it did, at this time of the season, when no serious demands for hasty shipments are being made, the disaster will not be as keenly felt as it would have had the building burned later in the season. The management are hopeful of escaping with a delay of only thirty or forty days' duration, for efforts were started this morning in the hope of obtaining temporary quarters.

### **Work Was Abandoned**

Work in the main carriage factory was abandoned Tuesday. About twelve men who were employed in the finishing rooms will be thrown out of work at present, and had the fire occurred two weeks later, it is very probable that a much greater number would have suffered by the disaster.

There was nothing saved from the building. A bicycle belonging to one of the employees, which cost \$35 last season, was included in the ruins, and all that remains of the former home of the Auburn Automobile Factory, in which the first car was built by the Eckharts, are the tottering chimneys, of four in number, and the smoldering ruins.

Frank Eckhart stated Tuesday morning that \$25,000 would be a conservative figure of the loss sustained, and practically a year's stock was included in the ruins. Present shipments will in all probability be made as several finished carriages were stored in the main factory. The Eckhart Company will draw heavily on the output of the body works for the next few months at least.

### **February 29, 1912. Auburn Handle Factory.**

#### **The Auburn Evening Star Reported:**

The large frame building in which the Auburn Handle Factory was housed, was reduced to a pile of smoldering ashes and twisted wreckage as a result of fire, which started at an early hour Wednesday morning, and a loss of approximately \$10,000 was sustained.

The building was a mass of flames when discovered by Fred Morr and although the fire department arrived upon the scene shortly after the alarm was sent in, the fire had advanced so rapidly that little resistance could be waged. It required the best efforts of the department to save the small ware room, east of the main factory, in which approximately \$2,500 worth of finished handles were stored for early shipment. At first sight of the burning structure, the firemen saw the folly of fighting the fire in the main building and immediately directed their attention to the ware room. The ware room south of the factory, in which close to \$3,000 of finished handles were stored, escaped the flames and shows no evidence of the fire which waged complete ruin to the factory proper. At first the region in the vicinity of the boiler room was accredited as the cradle of the early morning blaze, but later in the day a new theory was advanced. Tuesday afternoon one of the pulleys became heated and caught fire, and Mr. Vaughn is of the opinion that the sparks from the fire which was thought to have been extinguished, dropped in the dust and later burst forth into a blaze.

The plant belonged to J.M. Buck and fell to his heirs at his death a few years ago. R.W. Vaughn, who has operated the plant since his arrival here from Winchester, Indiana, six years ago, owned half interest in the machinery and interior equipment. Clyde Buck, one of the heirs, will arrive in the city Thursday and until that time it will be impossible to state whether or not the plant will be rebuilt. The factory was operated by and under the firm name of W. R. Vaughn and Company.



*One of the propositions which confront the manager at present is the disposition of the 120,000 feet of logs on hand, for it is necessary to dispose of the timber before the first of July as danger from worms will be encountered after that date.*

*Immediately before the fire, twelve men were employed and a large majority of them have already secured employment in local factories. The loss was estimated at \$10,000.*

*No insurance was carried on the building or contents.*

### **February 8, 1913. W.H. McIntyre Plant Two - Temporary Courthouse.**

After the demolition of the brick courthouse and before the completion of the present lime stone courthouse, a temporary courthouse was established in a building between West Eighth and West Ninth Streets along the east side of South Jackson Street.

At that time the W.H. McIntyre Company Automobile Plants One and Two were located along the east side of South Jackson Street. Although extensively modified, the north building still stands and is the location of the present Auburn House of Pancakes. The south building was identical and was connected to the north building by passageways extending over West Eighth Street at both the second and third story levels.

The south portion of the south building was used as a temporary courthouse. All court offices and records had been moved to the building. It



*Aftermath of the fire at the temporary Courthouse. The McIntyre Auto Showroom lost five McIntyre Cars, the Double Fabric Fire Company lost most of its assets, and the Auburn Courier Newspaper lost all assets, except some office equipment.*

was ideal for this purpose due to its size, central location, and the fact that it had a large walk-in vault for record storage. A crude courtroom was set up in a large storage room.

On the evening of February 8, 1913, this building burned in what was the most disastrous fire DeKalb County had ever known. The alarm was sounded about dark and the whole town turned out to help fight the fire. The water supply was soon exhausted, and little could be done to fight the fire as it spread throughout the three-story building. The firefighters and citizens concentrated on retrieving as much as possible from the burned building. Fortunately, most county records were saved. Most important were the recorder's records, which affected the title to real estate. The only records lost completely were those of the office of Clerk of the Circuit Court.

The records which were saved were quickly moved to the partially completed courthouse, and temporary offices were established there. Necessity pressed the new building into service before it was completed.

The burned building also housed many other businesses. The McIntyre Auto salesroom lost five McIntyre cars, the Double Fabric Tire Company lost most of its assets, and the Auburn Courier lost everything except some typewriters and office equipment.

Other major fires are recorded in the pages of the Auburn Fire Department's Log Book:

#### **November 16, 1892**

Opera House - loss of \$7,000

#### **November 12, 1893**

Church Furniture Factory - loss of \$29,000

#### **March 22, 1895**

Auburn Foundry and Machine Shop  
- loss of \$45,000

#### **December 27, 1913**

Auburn Post Card Co. - loss \$50,000

#### **November 16, 1916**

Auburn Foundry - loss \$5,500

#### **January 4, 1917**

Auburn Roller Mills - loss \$5,000

**April 25, 1919**

Osborn and Hower Garage – loss \$8,180

**October 2, 1919**

Auburn Automobile Co. Explosion in enamel oven – loss \$30,000

**December 24, 1923**

Auburn Masonic Temple Building. First floor Businesses were Mr. Baker, the Grocery, Auburn Security Co., Albert Grubb, and C.W. Creasy. The Masonic Lodge was on second floor – loss \$49,000 (Note: This was the location W.H. McIntyre Plant Two which burned on February 8, 1913.)



*Aftermath of the fire, which heavily damaged the Masonic Temple Building on December 24, 1923. It was built on the same site as McIntyre Plant Two, which was destroyed by fire in 1913.*

**December 23, 1924**

Leader Department Store – loss \$6,534

**January 21, 1929**

Dilgard Building along with Bishop Candy Store, Hubbard Bryers, and Dilgard Furniture Store – loss \$33,400

**December 17, 1949**

Delucenay Drug Store  
Total Loss

**July 29, 1950**

Stewart's Bakery 7th & Cedar Streets  
\$11,022 Loss

**June 16, 1951**

Auburn Foundry – loss \$500,000

**January 23, 1951**

Bassett Motor Sales – loss \$30,000

**February 6, 1952**

Neco Manufacturing Co. – loss \$42,000

**September 6, 1954**

Citizens Lumber Company West 5th Street  
\$12,000 loss

**January 25, 1955**

Russell Myers Potato Storage – loss \$40,000

**July 8, 1959**

Leas' Market – loss \$95,850

**September 22, 1960**

Russell Myers Potato Storage

**January 23, 1961**

Shine Shoe Store – loss \$59,000

**October 16, 1964**

Russell Myers Potato Storage

**December 2, 1965**

Russell Myers Potato Storage

**September 17, 1969**

Davis Studio – loss \$26,225

**May 24, 1973**

Auburn Automobile Administration Building  
– loss \$125,000

**August 26, 1978**

Garn's Candy Company





**January 4, 1980**

Western Auto Store



**February 11, 1981**

Maverick Club

**April 26, 1984**

Four buildings at southwest corner of Union and Seventh streets. Indiana Employment Office, Wible Real Estate, Joes' Barber Shop, and Holben's Garage. A number of collector cars stored at Holben's Garage were destroyed. A woman and child were saved when they jumped out of a second story window.



**November 10, 1988**

Penguin Point Restaurant on West 7th Street  
Total Loss

**January 9, 1989**

Church Destroyed By Fire at Twelfth  
and Van Auken Streets. Wind Chill was -11 °

**June 6, 1992**

Structure Fire at 102 North Main Street  
Heavy Damage to Tempus Technologies  
Office on Second Floor

**November 12, 1992**

Cedar Shores Apartments West 7th Street  
Total Loss. Determined to be arson.

**December 6, 1992**

American Legion 310 East Ninth gutted by fire  
determined to be arson

**December 3, 1993**

Former IGA Store on South Wayne Street  
destroyed by fire  
16 Collector cars stored inside were destroyed  
Arson was Blamed



**July 19, 1995**

Greenhurst County Club on North Main Street  
destroyed by fire



**January 30, 2003**

Auburn Foundry explosion and fire

**October 1, 2004**

Strobies Indoor Golf on North Indiana Avenue  
destroyed by fire

**March 2, 2006**

Beauty Salon on North Jackson Street  
destroyed by fire  
Upstairs apartments saved

## AUBURN HAS BIG FIRE

One of Auburn's big industries, the DeKalb Furniture Mfg. Co., was totally destroyed by fire on April 24, 1925.

A blaze starting in the paint room in the southwest portion of the building gained rapid headway before the fire alarm was sounded. Smoke and fire was rolling out of the windows in that entire section of the building when the firemen arrived at the scene.

The origin of the fire is unknown. There was no explosion, but flames seemed to break out all at once. Men were at work in the room, but they were unable to explain how the fire might have started.

A number of persons estimated the loss at \$60,000 to \$80,000. There was \$12,000 worth of lumber in the dry kilns at the plant. M. Martin Polakow, the owner of the factory, was unable to give any definite figure late Friday afternoon, but stated his loss would be heavy.

Three streams of water were thrown on the fire, but a high wind fanned the flames and the firemen were unable to stop its progress. The high wind drove the flames through the entire structure.

The building and contents are a total loss. The factory was a two story frame structure covered with sheet metal. Large quantities of lumber used in the manufacture of novelty furniture, the product of the company, paints and oils, were consumed rapidly.

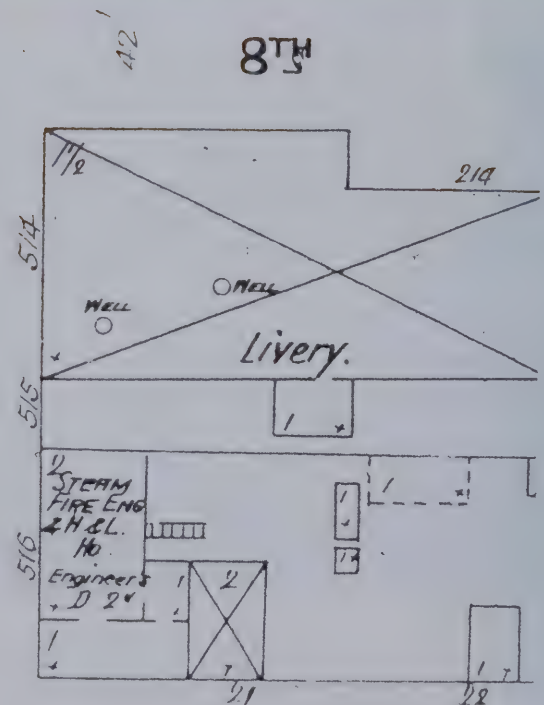
The dry kiln, located at the northeast portion of the factory property, was the last to burn. Firemen had difficulty in coping with the blaze because of the extreme heat from the burning structure.

Record - Herald April 30, 1925

## Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

From 1889 to 1923, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps were published periodically, which showed the location of commercial properties and detail relevant to fire insurance ratings, such as materials of construction, proximity to fire cisterns, whether there was a night watchman, etc.

These maps are useful in locating and identifying structures for historical research purposes.





## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Public Awareness Function

### Public Education

The Auburn Fire Department places a large emphasis on educating the citizens it serves about the danger of fire. The goal is to teach as many people as possible, ways to avoid having a fire in their home, or how to escape from a fire. There is a series of programs offered either off-site (at various locations) or on-site (at the training facility or one of the stations). The public education division is under the leadership of Captain Chip LaRowe.

Examples of the Public Education Function include:

- Safe use of portable heaters
- Residential sprinkling systems
- Dangers of Carbon Monoxide
- How your bedroom door can save your life
- Lunch with the Chief Program
- Public Education Trailer
- Survive Alive Program
- Fire safety recall information
- Holiday safety information

### Pre-Incident Factory Reviews

The Auburn Fire Department staff conducts reviews of factories to become familiar with the



*Captain Chip LaRowe helps a child perform "Stop-Drop-& Roll"*



*Auburn Fire Department Mascot "Blaze" attends various public functions to promote fire safety.*



*Fire Chief Michael VanZile instructs a fire extinguisher class participant.*

layout, location of hazards, and availability of water in the event of an emergency.

### **Fire Prevention**

The Auburn Fire Department places a high priority on fire prevention. The easiest fires to extinguish are the fires that are prevented. The Fire Department employs a full time Fire Marshall to guide efforts in Code Enforcement and Investigations. As more is learned about what causes fires in the area, many of the public education programs are adapted to concentrate on those areas.

### **DeKalb County Safe Home Project**

As an extension of Fire Prevention, the Auburn Fire Department encourages everyone, especially those with special needs, to fill out a DeKalb County Project Safe Home information form. The purpose of this form is to update the E911 data system to include any special information felt important for emergency service providers to know. The availability of information, such as the presence of a handicapped resident, the presence of explosives, pets, or gaining entry to a home, could mean the difference between life and death at a time when seconds count. In addition, this gives dispatchers an opportunity to be sure that the information currently contained in the E911 system is correct.

Since 1999 the Auburn Fire Department has received the "Life Safety Achievement Award" from the Residential Fire Safety Institute. This award reflects the fire department's efforts in Fire and Life Safety Education in reducing the number of fires and related fire deaths in the City. This

award has been received every year starting in 1999 until 2008. The award was not received in 2009, due to a fire death fatality.





## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Collateral And Sponsored Organizations

### Auburn Fire Department Auxiliary Auxiliary Emergency Kitchen / Fundraising

The Auburn Fire Auxiliary was chartered on July 13, 1934 and served the members of the fire department for many years. One of the major functions of the Auburn Fire Department Auxiliary was to provide for an emergency kitchen. In the event the firefighters are on the scene of an incident for an extended period of time, Auxiliary members would gather at one of the fire stations and prepare food and drinks to be delivered to the members at the scene.

The Auburn Fire Department Auxiliary also served as a fundraising organization for the Fire Department. While the department is supported through the City of Auburn, the funds provided through the Auxiliary allowed the department to provide extra services both to the public and to the firefighters. In addition, the Auxiliary is able to provide additional funding for equipment needs of the Fire Department as well as for special events and recognition for the firefighters.

The Auxiliary membership consisted mainly of the firefighter's spouses, other family members, and friends. In recent years the Auxiliary has been replaced with Support Firefighters.



Explorer Firefighters Walker Healey (left) and Skylar VanZile (right) conducting CPR training.



Explorer Firefighter Skylar VanZile extinguishing a "pan fire" during fire extinguisher training.

## Auburn Fire Department Support Firefighters

Support Firefighter Personnel give the fire department an opportunity to fill a variety of support positions such as rehabilitation, fundraising, public education, photography and many other fire ground support functions. These positions are filled by individuals who are not combat firefighters but could be utilized by the fire department.

This relieves operational firefighters so that they can concentrate on training and fire ground operations.

### Auburn Fire Department Explorers Post #8203

The Auburn Fire Department in conjunction with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) began a Fire Service Exploring Program in 2009. This program is open to young men and women who are 14 (and have completed the 8th grade) or 15 to 20 years old.

This Explorer Post provides practical experience, life skills, and leadership training as it pertains to the fire service.



*Explorer Firefighter Walker Healey in CPR training.*

## FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1895

Alarm sent in at south end a/c of fire at Foundry of which the Co responded but owing in the long run and fire had such headway buildings was destroyed but the Co had hard fighting to keep fire from spreading loss to Auburn Foundry & Machine Works \$45,000.



*Rehab area set up by support firefighters at a structure fire.*



## CHAPTER NINE

# Auburn Professional Firefighters Local 2454 of the International Association Of Firefighters

Auburn's career firefighters are members of the International Association of Firefighters .

Auburn Professional Firefighters Local 2454 was chartered on July 31, 1975. Charter Members were Bill Walters, Clarence Boger, Dick Stahly, Blake Smith and Curt Howard. The impetus for the formation of the local is best summed up in its Constitution and By-Laws. "The object of this local shall be the fostering and encouragement of a higher degree of skill and efficiency, the cultivation of friendship and the fellowship amongst its members, and the elevation and improvement of the moral, intellectual, social and economic conditions; to secure lawful and humane working hours and proper remuneration for the duties performed."

The first meeting occurred on August 4, 1975 with Bill Walters presiding.

Past Presidents of the Local are as follows:

Clarence Boger	1975-1992
Tony Griffin	1993-1997
Tim Maloney	1998-1999
Mike VanZile	2000-2003
Joe Molargik	2004-2007
Andy Maloney	2008-Present



## VOLUNTEERS TO THE END

Fate and the strong hand of coincidence played important roles in the tragic death of Edward J. Quinn, volunteer member of the Auburn Fire Department killed in a traffic accident early Sunday morning while returning to Auburn after giving standby service in the downtown fire here Saturday night.

Mr. Quinn and his wife were visiting in Fort Wayne Saturday evening and happened along shortly after the fire broke out. Always willing to give assistance whenever and wherever needed, Mr. Quinn suggested to Fire Chief Fred Goeglein that he return to Auburn and get some members of the Auburn Department to serve as standby units in the event that fire broke out elsewhere in the city.

Mr. Quinn then returned to Auburn where he left his wife and returned here with seven other Auburn volunteer firemen to serve as a Reserve while Fort Wayne Firemen were fighting the blazing inferno.

### Released from Duty

When the fire was brought under control, Auburn Fire Chief Gilbert Potter released Quinn and Raymond Kester at 2 a.m. Sunday and told them that they could go home. Kester was driving the car that figured in the crash and also was killed in the collision.

Chief Goeglein said today that Quinn approached him at the fire several times, offering his assistance and that Quinn, as far as the chief knew, had then gone to the No. 10 Engine house supposedly to serve as a Reserve.





## CHAPTER TEN

# Auburn Fire Department Vision And Mission

### VISION STATEMENT:

To be a fire department which embraces the changing needs and expectations of our citizens through constant diligence, training, and planning.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

To deliver emergency services to those in need.

- To perform those duties the Auburn Fire Department will be dedicated to Customer Service through the philosophy which values employee contributions, promotes teamwork, and participation.
- The Core Values that will guide the actions of all members of the Auburn Fire Department are:

- Service: Being aware of those who need the fire department's assistance and meeting or exceeding their expectations for service.
- Excellence: Always striving to achieve the highest performance in all aspects of our work.
- Integrity: Committing ourselves to elevated standards of trust, honesty,

and accountability while promoting professionalism in a fair and impartial manner.

- Pride: Believing in the value of our work, considering it be the most noble of professions, and to respond effectively to the changing needs of the community.

- Through active leadership, we shall promote these values during:

- Training
- Public Education
- Prevention
- Emergency Response

### Functions/Services

The Auburn Fire Department provides for life and property safety from the threat of fires, natural or man-made disasters, and medical emergencies. It operates with a combination of full-time and volunteer firefighters. It staffs two stations with a total of 9 pieces of firefighting apparatus, and 4 support vehicles.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1893

Alarm was turned in from south end box about 2:05 a.m. Caused by fire in Church Furniture Factory. The Factory was entirely consumed together with a vacant house belonging to W.H. McQuister situated about 20 feet east. The Company got out in good time, but the Factory was a mass of flames when the alarm was given. So attention was paid solely to adjoining houses and the German Methodist Church. Loss to Furniture Company about \$24,000 with \$6,000 Insurance.

Loss on McQuister house \$800. Insurance \$500. Mr. George Frederick, the Night Watchman at the Factory, perished in the fire.





## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# The Auburn Fire Department Training Facility

The Auburn Fire Department Training Facility was established in 1996 with the purpose of providing realistic and relevant training for the City of Auburn, DeKalb County, and surrounding counties for fire fighting and emergency response training. Through the hard work of the Auburn Firefighters and local businesses, different training props have been added annually. There are now eleven (11) different areas situated on 2 acres. The facility uses Auburn Fire Department instructors as well as outside instructors to teach courses under the direction of the Auburn Fire Department training facility.

The Training Facility conducts weekly sessions that include outside hands-on training.

The Auburn Fire Department's training facility was organized in 1996 with one pole structure that was used for roof ventilation training. Over several years, the facility grew into a comprehensive Firefighter I/II training ground that allows firefighters to train on the majority of the Job Performance Requirements for NFPA 1001.

On August 9, 2006, the Auburn Fire Department Training Facility was designated as an Official Indiana Firefighter Training Center for District 3 by Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels and The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).



*Firefighters conducting Liquid Petroleum Gas fire training.*



*Captain Chip LaRowe "Stoking the Fire" during a live fire training exercise.*

That first structure has been transferred into a Multi-evolution training structure (METS) that allows firefighters to train on forcible entry, ventilation, ladder placement, and ladder rescue. In addition, the firefighters can train on Firefighter Survival/Rapid Intervention Crew Training.

Another valuable live fire training tool that is used by numerous fire departments is the Phase I Flashover container.

The container was purchased in 1999. Flash-over classes have been conducted for fire departments from throughout northern Indiana. This training provides valuable information not only for new firefighters, but for the seasoned veteran as well. The students learn of the dangers and signs of a potential flashover in the class environment and then are able to have it reinforced visually in the container.

In 2001, a Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Confidence Course was built to give the firefighters confidence in wearing and using an SCBA in a variety of different conditions. The course allows firefighters to transverse rafters, move through an entanglement hazard, enter into an attic space, and move through numerous low profile situations. This training prop also addresses some of the sections of OSHA Respiratory Protection CFR 1910.134(k).

In order to meet the fire control skill requirements, numerous propane gas fired props have been purchased or built. The system is designed so that there are two built in safety devices which allow for controlled fire simulations. There is the capability to simulate a variety of fire conditions and situations.

The two story residential, non-gas fired, burn building used in structural fire fighting training at the facility, was built in 2005-2006. The building foundation is approximately 24 x 40 feet and approximately 16 feet high to the roof line. The building has one internal stairwell with an additional stairwell on the exterior. The rear of the structure includes a simulated area for securing utilities. The structure is built from five (5) shipping containers. The inside of the structure is lined with insulation and steel, which allows firefighters to burn anywhere on the inside. There are six (6) temperature probes throughout the structure to monitor conditions while the burns



*Firefighters performing decon during Hazardous Material Training.*



*Recruit firefighters assemble before a training session.*



*Firefighters conducting vehicle fire training.*

are taking place. The doors are 2-hour fire rated steel entry doors and the window openings include steel shutters that can be opened or closed to vary interior conditions during live burns. Fires are set with only wooden pallets and straw.



This structure is used for live fire training, search and rescue, hose advancement, securing utilities and also firefighter survival and Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) training.

A fully functioning sprinkler system, which was added in 2006, and donated by Kendallville Fire Department, compliments the live fire training props. The firefighters can connect into the Fire Department Connection and supply a sprinkler system. The firefighters are able to train in the overall operation of a sprinkler system as well as see the various types of sprinkler heads and learn the art of stopping an activated sprinkler head.

A ventilation structure was added in 2007, and was designed to the specifications of most residential roof structures in the area. The design allows the roof to articulate, which gives the firefighters the opportunity to train on ventilating a flat roof as well as two different heights of pitched roofs. The firefighters can ventilate the roof structure using hand tools or gasoline powered saws.

A couple of specialized training areas include the confined space and hazardous materials. In addition to training firefighters, local industry has utilized the site for their annual training.

A couple of hazardous materials props are utilized to enhance the skills required in these areas. The existing one-ton chlorine tank and barrels make a realistic training scenario.

A special area of the training facility, the "Survive Alive House," was added in 1999. This house is used by all 3rd grade students within DeKalb County for the purpose of teaching them how to escape from their home in the event of a fire. The house has some unique features built into the structure. The house has a simulated second floor for practicing escape with escape ladders, the bedroom doors are capable of being heated, artificial smoke can be pumped throughout the house, and any smoke detector can be set off manually, all from a separate control room that is not visible to the students.

With the help of the City of Auburn, the Auburn Firefighters, and local industry, the Auburn Fire Department Training Facility has grown to become one of the best in the area. The ability to have a classroom session in the training room



*Overhead view of Training Center taken during the August 9th, 2006 dedication.*



*Firefighters conducting repelling training on the 5-story training tower.*



*Indiana state Governor Mitch Daniels at the August 9th, 2006 Training Center dedication.*

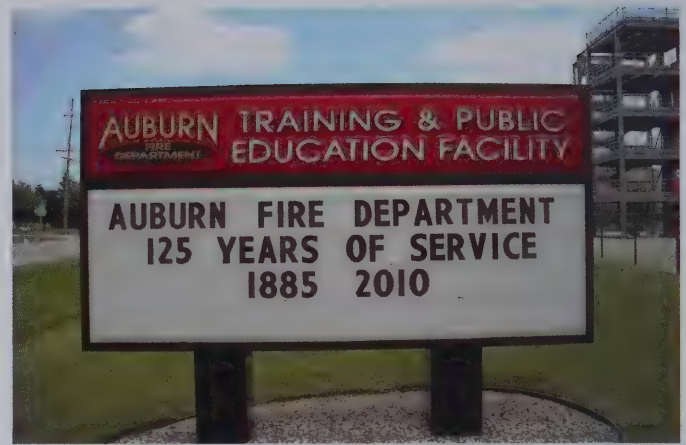
and then having that information reinforced through hands on training is invaluable. Making that even better, is the fact that the students can walk out of the classroom right onto the training facility.



In 2009, one of the largest training props was built on the facility grounds, a 5 story tower. The process and construction started in 2001, when the foundation was poured and the funding was secured through the Build Indiana Funds. Due to budget constraints, the grants were never executed for the tower. The foundation and land sat empty for the next 9 years, and then the interest, desire, and circumstances changed. Another grant was secured through the State of Indiana Fire Training System under the department of Indiana Homeland Security and Governor Mitch Daniels. Local business contacts and partnerships were made, and soon the tower was a reality.

The tower allows for numerous training functions to be conducted in the areas of ground ladders, aerial truck ladders, rope rescue, hose advancement, high and low angle rescues, physical fitness, fire sprinkler and fire suppression activities.

The Auburn Fire Department Training Facility offers many training courses that include classroom and hands on skill evaluations. Courses offered include many of the State of Indiana Fire Certification courses such as Mandatory Firefighter, Firefighter I/II, Fire Investigations and Fire Inspector yearly. Fire Instructor, Fire Officer and Driver Operator courses are provided every other year as well as training in some specialized areas, such as confined space, rope rescue and hazardous materials, several times throughout the year. Live fire training is provided, following NFPA 1403, for county fire departments, fire departments from the rest of District 3, as well as fire departments from other Districts, and Emergency Response Teams from industries located in DeKalb and Allen Counties. The live fire training includes many props and structures that are available. Live fire training in a two story steel structure, capable of Class A fires in any of the rooms or hallways, utilizing a four station training session, which includes fire attack, back up, search, and RIC is provided. A propane fed vehicle fire simulator allows firefighters to train on fires involving engine compartments, passenger areas and gas leak fires. Several other flammable liquid fire props include simulated Class B spill fires, simulated vessel impingement fire involving a relief valve fire, an industrial flange fire, a stove or oven fire, and a dumpster fire. These live fire trainings are held monthly or as often as a few times a week.



*The sign at the Auburn Training and Public Education Facility contains messages as to fire prevention, and welcomes visiting Firemen.*

The training facility also hosts two Ivy Tech of Fort Wayne classes which are offered in the Fire Science degree program every year. Local police departments, industry, city utility departments, school corporations and small businesses attend classes in a variety of subjects including fire extinguishers, confined space and hazardous materials. The classroom is also utilized by other organizations for training purposes, United Way, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and OSHA have all used the facility for training purposes.

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1896

Alarm sounded at about 12:30 noon on account of fire at Loop Factory at Auburn Junction to which Company responded, but on account of no water being handy, Engine did not go but Hook & Ladder Truck was taken down and fire was got under control. Loss was about \$250.00.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

# Gallery of Current Auburn Fire Department Members

### Command and Staff Personnel



Michael VanZile  
Fire Chief



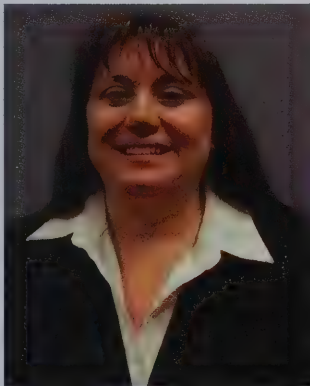
Michael Good  
Deputy Chief



Doug Cox  
Division Chief



David Bunn  
Fire Marshal



Shawn Rayle  
Administrative  
Assistant

## Career Officers and Firefighters



Kim Boger  
Lieutenant



Dan Braun  
Firefighter



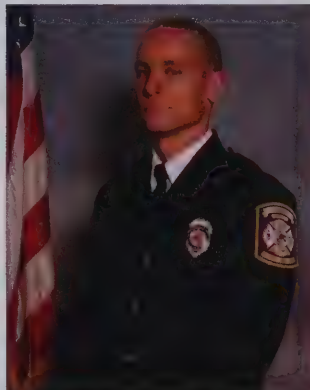
Gabe Creech  
Firefighter



Tony Griffin  
Captain



James Hile  
Firefighter



Travis Hill  
Firefighter



Shane Jacobs  
Firefighter



Troy Jester  
Lieutenant



Ken Knox  
Captain



Rob Koher  
Firefighter



Jason Kreischer  
Firefighter



Vernon "Chip" LaRowe  
Captain



Andrew Maloney  
Firefighter



Joe Molargik  
Lieutenant



Scott Russell  
Firefighter



## Volunteer Firefighters



Robert Allmandinger  
Support Firefighter



Jeff Antrup  
Firefighter



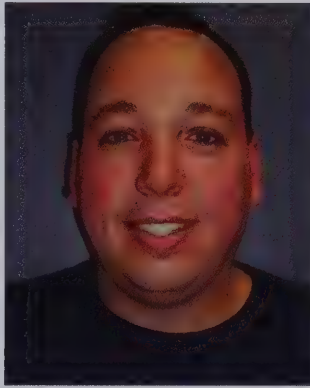
Scott Badger  
Firefighter



Todd Bonecutter  
Support Firefighter



Mark Bryant  
Firefighter



Dave Clark  
Firefighter



Jamie Collins  
Firefighter



Peter Hathaway  
Firefighter



Bruce Hunter  
Firefighter



Nick Johnson  
Firefighter



Steve Jones  
Firefighter



Cindy Kimmel  
Support Firefighter



Steve Kummernuss  
Chaplain



Josh LaRowe  
Firefighter



David Marlowe  
Firefighter



Lara Myers  
Support Firefighter

## Volunteer Firefighters, cont.



Steffanie Myers  
Photographer



Jason Penland  
Firefighter



Mark Powell  
Firefighter



Byron Schutt  
Support Firefighter



Breen Skeens  
Firefighter



Heather Slone  
Firefighter



Bill Walters  
Support Firefighter



Paul White  
Firefighter



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# Gallery of Current Auburn Fire Department Apparatus

### Current Fire Apparatus

The Auburn Fire Department presently maintains 9 major pieces of fire apparatus and 4 pieces of support vehicles for use at various emergencies. Different trucks respond to different types of situations depending on the equipment needed at an emergency scene.

### Rehab 20



Rehab 20 is a 1992 Ford mini-Rescue truck used for Fire Fighter Rehabilitation. The truck carries various supplies to help rehydrate, re-nourish, and provide shelter for firefighters in extreme weather conditions.

### Engine 22



Engine 22 is a 2008 Crimson Fire Engine, purchased new in 2008-2009 at a cost of \$471,128.00. It carries 1000 gallons of water and can pump 1500 gallons of water per minute. Engine 22 responds from Station #2. It has the capacity to seat 5 personnel and responds to every call within Station 2's response area. In addition, the apparatus responds to all fire calls anywhere in the city. Engine 22 also responds to incidents on Interstate 69 from mile marker 127 south to the DeKalb/Allen County line. It carries all of the needed equipment to begin operation on any type of incident to which Auburn Fire Department responds. In addition to hydraulic and manual rescue tools, the pump carries basic life saving equipment including an Automatic External Defibrillator to be used in the event of a heart attack.

### Engine 23



Engine 23 is a 1997 Seagrave Fire Engine. With a capacity of 6 personnel, this vehicle is a 'first out' apparatus for the Auburn Fire Department. This Engine operates out of Station #1 and responds on all alarms in that station's response area. Engine 23 is equipped with all the necessary tools to perform at least the basic tasks the Auburn Fire Department may be required to fulfill. There is basic medical equipment in the event of a medical emergency, including an Automatic External Defibrillator for a heart emergency. This pump also carries hydraulic rescue tools to be used at an accident scene. In addition to covering a portion of the city, this apparatus responds to a fire call anywhere in the city and the rural areas north and east of Auburn.

### Engine 24



Engine 24 is a 1995 Seagrave Fire Engine and it responds from Station #1. It has the capacity to seat 6 personnel and currently is in "Reserve Status". Whenever Engine 22 or Engine 23 responds to a mutual aid run, Engine 24 is brought up "in service" to carry out the duties of the missing Engine. Engine 24 carries all of the needed equipment to begin operation on any type of incident to which Auburn Fire Department responds. In addition to hydraulic and manual rescue tools, the pump carries basic life saving equipment including an Automatic External Defibrillator to be used in the event of a heart attack.

Engine 22, Engine 23, and Engine 24 have a piece of firefighting equipment known as a 'stinger' or 'deck gun'. Capable of being used mounted on top of the apparatus or securely placed on the ground, this piece of equipment is capable of throwing large amounts of water over a larger distance than a regular fire nozzle.

### Tender 25



Tender 25 carries 2000 gallons of water, and was built by CSI Apparatus on a Kenworth chassis. There are a few areas in the Auburn Fire Department response area that do not have city water and fire hydrants. Tender 25 is housed at Station #1 and automatically responds to emergencies within those areas. Tender 25 is also used as part of a 'water shuttle' on mutual aid calls to help supply water when other fire departments need it.

### Squad 26



Squad 26 was built by Alexis Fire Apparatus. This vehicle seats 6 with the capacity of carrying large amounts of equipment. Squad 26 does not respond alone to any incident because it is not equipped to pump water. It does, however, carry many tools and other equipment needed at almost any emergency. Squad 26 is located at Station #1 and responds to a majority of the calls the Auburn Fire Department makes.



Squad 26 has equipment for Hazardous Materials Operations and may other types of special rescue operations such as ice and/or water rescues, confined space rescues, and rope rescues. This vehicle also carries basic firefighting tools.

### Truck 27



Truck 27 is a 1993 Seagrave aerial platform. Assigned to Station #2, this truck runs as a first out piece of equipment on all structure fires and possible structure fires within the response area. Capable of carrying a crew of 6, this vehicle is used for fire suppression and rescue operations.

Fully extended the platform of this emergency vehicle reaches a height of 105 feet. In addition, it is equipped with a 1500 GPM single stage waterous pump.

### Brush 28



Brush 28 is a Chevrolet 2500 extended cab 4-wheel drive pick-up which responds to any incident that requires firefighters to work off a paved surface. Brush 28 is housed at Station #2 and is used as grass/field fire apparatus.

The bed of Brush 28 contains a water tank and pump that supplies water to an on-board hose reel, or through lines attached to one of three discharged outlets.

In addition to the pump and hoses carried by Brush 28, it also contains hand pump operated

backpacks, which can be used in areas that a vehicle cannot get into.

### Truck 29



Truck 29 is a 1972 Mack with a Baker Aerialscope. The maximum height of the bucket on this vehicle is 75 feet. Unlike Truck 27, Truck 29 does not have the capability to pump its own water. It is primarily used for rescue operations but used with a pump, can be used to control a fire. In addition, many other area departments know that this vehicle is ready immediately should they need it. Capable of seating 5, this emergency vehicle is assigned to Station #1.

There is a significance to the numbers assigned to the fire apparatus and officers for each fire department in the county: Each fire department in the county is assigned a number range to signify department identification.

10's	Ashley
20's	Auburn
30's	Butler
40's	Corunna
50's	Garrett
60's	Spencerville
70's	Concord (formerly St. Joe)
80's	Waterloo
90's	Jackson Township (Department was organized after the numbering system was devised.)

At a fire scene, where multiple fire departments are present, personnel can quickly ascertain which department vehicle is there by its number.

As noted above, all of Auburn's apparatus identification numbers fall within the 20 range.

Other vehicles and apparatus presently used include:

- Unit 1            2005 Dodge Durango Fire Chief Command Vehicle
- Unit 2            2004 Ford Expedition Deputy Chief Command Vehicle
- Unit 3            2006 Chevy Trail Blazer Division Chief Command Vehicle
- Unit 15          2007 Dodge Durango Fire Marshal Vehicle



- Haz-Mat Trailer      16' Wells Cargo Enclosed trailer used to haul hazardous material, equipment and firefighting foam.
- Rescue Boat        14' Boat used for surface water rescue
- Golf Cart            Specialized Golf Cart is used for special events that require a quick response to fires and other emergencies in crowd areas.



## FIRE FIGHTERS

A village fire-company does not often get a chance to show off, and so when it does get a chance, it makes the most of it. Such citizens of that village as were of a thoughtful and judicious temperament did not insure against fire; they insured against the fire-company.

— Mark Twain, 1894



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

# In Memoriam

### Line of Duty / Active Firefighter Deaths



Firefighter Edward J. Quinn (L) 1907-1947  
Firefighter Raymond Kester (R) 1910-1947

In 1947, two Auburn Volunteer Firemen were killed while returning to Auburn after serving standby duty at Fort Wayne while the Fort Wayne Fire Department was fighting a major fire at Standard Rug and Linoleum Co. on West Jefferson Street.

Eight Auburn Volunteers had gone to Fort Wayne for this purpose. Auburn Chief, Gilbert Potter, released the Auburn group from duty at about 2 a.m.

Edward J. Quinn and Raymond Kester were returning to Auburn on State Road 427 where, about five miles north of Fort Wayne, their vehicle slid on the snow covered pavement, sideswiping one vehicle and colliding with another.

Though both were thought to be dead at the scene, they were transported by ambulance to St. Joseph's Hospital. En route the ambulance was struck by a Nickel Plate Train. Both were pronounced officially dead at the hospital.

The Fort Wayne Journal Gazette stated that the men were "Volunteers to the end".

Mr. Quinn was Superintendent in the Foley Pattern Shop, and Mr. Kester was Maintenance Foreman at the Auburn Rubber Corporation.

Members of the Auburn Fire Department assisted in the funeral services.



Firefighter Gary McPheeters 1957-2004  
Badge Number 203

Gary McPheeters became a Volunteer Firefighter for the Auburn Fire Department on May 4, 1982 and was hired as a Career Firefighter on May 26, 1986. Firefighter McPheeters was a full-time driver/firefighter and held the rank of Lieutenant for a short time.

In 2003, Firefighter McPheeters became ill and was diagnosed with a form of lung cancer, which ended his career and forced him to retire on January 28, 2004. He succumbed to his illness on February 18, 2004.



# DONORS

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